

## CHRONOLOGY

- 1808 April 4 - Albert Gallatin, U.S. Secretary of the Treasury, submitted his historic report on "Public Roads and Canals" to the U.S. Senate. This important statement of national policy for internal improvements contained a long list of proposed road and canal projects to tie the young nation together.
- 1824 April 30 - General Survey Act authorized the president to survey routes for roads and canals that he judged to have national import and to employ Army Engineers in this work.
- 1826 March 3 - Congress authorized first survey for a canal between the Atlantic Ocean and the Gulf of Mexico.
- 1828 May 23 - Congress authorized the first improvement on the future GIWW, appropriating \$18,000 to deepen the channel through Pass au Heron near Mobile Bay.
- 1830 May 31 - Congress appropriated \$10,400 to complete the survey of a canal to connect the waters of the Atlantic with the Gulf of Mexico.
- 1832 July 4 - Congress authorized survey for canals to connect bays and rivers from St. Andrew Bay to Apalachicola Bay and from Pensacola Bay to Mobile Bay under a \$3,000 appropriation.
- 1845 Florida and Texas admitted to the Union.
- 1852 August 30 - Congress appropriated \$20,000 for a survey for a ship canal. across the Florida peninsula. In the same act, Congress appropriated \$25,000 for construction of a harbor on Lake Pontchartrain near New Orleans.
- 1873 March 3 - Congress authorized a survey for connecting the inland waters along the margin of the Gulf from Donaldsonville, Louisiana, to the Rio Grande river, appropriating \$20,000. This was the first survey for an inland waterway west of the Mississippi River.
- 1875 March 3 - Congress authorized a survey for a cross-Florida canal and for an inland waterway to connect that canal to the Mississippi River.
- July 10 - Army Engineer Captain Charles W. Howell, reporting on the survey authorized in 1873, presented the first plan for an inland waterway west of the Mississippi River.
- 1878 June 18 - Rivers and Harbors Act authorized a survey for a "ship-canal" from the St. Marys River to the Gulf of Mexico.

- 1880 June 14 - Congress authorized another cross-Florida survey, this one for "steamboat communication" from the St. Johns River via Tohopekaliga Lake to Charlotte Harbor.
- 1887 Project adopted to improve Bayou Plaquemine with dredging and lock construction.
- 1888 Caloosahatchee Canal opened, linking Lake Okeechobee with the Gulf of Mexico.
- 1890 Congress authorized construction on Florida's Gulf coast of a 5-by-100-foot channel from Tampa Bay to Sarasota and a 3-by-75-foot channel from Sarasota to Venice.
- 1892 Congress authorized a project to enlarge and straighten channel, previously dredged by the state of Texas in 1859, through West Galveston Bay. The new channel, terminating at Christmas point in Oyster Bay, was dredged to dimensions of 3-3.5 feet deep and 100-200 feet wide between 1893 and 1895.
- 1897 February 11 - Galveston and Brazes Navigation Company offered its n-mile canal from the Brazes River to Oyster Bay to the federal government. Congress authorized the purchase at \$30,000, and the federal government completed the transaction in December, 1902.
- 1900 Reports of surveys and examinations of certain adjacent streams in Texas--Caney Creek, the San Bernard River, and Oyster Creek--were made with a view toward incorporating them into a network of protected waterways.
- 1901 Oil discovered at Spindletop, near Beaumont, Texas.
- 1905 March 3 - Rivers and Harbors Act authorized a second comprehensive round of surveys, thirty years after those of 1873, for an inland waterway from the Rio Grande to the Mississippi River. Future Chief of Engineers Edgar Jadwin, looking at conservative dimensions of 5 by 40 feet, proposed taking advantage of the Bayou Plaquemine improvements and found much of Howell's earlier report still applicable. Jadwin cited coal, rice, oil, sugar, lumber, and cotton as products for which the waterway was likely to prove important.
- August 8 - Convention in Victoria gave birth to the Interstate Inland Waterway League, pledged to the goal of a continuous system that would tie together the 18,000 miles of navigable waters extending from the Great Lakes, through the Mississippi Valley, and along the Louisiana and Texas coastlines. The league grew into the Intracoastal Waterway League of Louisiana and Texas, then changed its name to the Intracoastal Canal Association of Louisiana and Texas, and eventually became the Gulf Intracoastal Canal Association, as it is known today.

1907 March 2 - Congress appropriated \$89,292 to connect the Bayou Teche at Franklin with the Mermentau River, providing for the first Louisiana segment in the GIWW Main Channel.

President Theodore Roosevelt established the Inland Waterways Commission in response to public pressure for a comprehensive plan to improve and control U.S. river system.

1908 November 30 - Statement by Gulf Division Engineer Colonel Lansing H. Beach favoring improvement of the segment between Brazes River and Matagorda Bay reflected a shift toward a more liberal approach:

"Even should local conditions not be such as to demand the improvement of this portion of the waterways, . . . the fact that it is one link in the chain of waterways paralleling the shore is sufficient . . . to cause the improvement to be made."

1909 March 3 - Rivers and Harbors Act contained a broad, new national policy on coastal navigation by ordering surveys for intracoastal waterways from Boston, Massachusetts to the Rio Grande. The surveys examined the feasibility of a 12-foot-deep channel across Florida and a 9-foot-deep channel along the Gulf of Mexico from St. George Sound, Florida to the Rio Grande.

1910 June 25 - Congress authorized several improvements along the Gulf Coast: from Clearwater Harbor to Tampa Bay, from the Apalachicola River to St. Andrew Bay, and through the Narrows in Santa Rosa Sound between Choctawhatchee Bay and Pensacola. West of the Mississippi River, the act authorized construction of the reach from the Mermentau River to the Sabine River and from the Brazes River to Matagorda Bay.

1912 July 25 - Congress appropriated \$50,000 to complete the improvement to the channel connecting Mobile Bay and Mississippi sound .

1919 March 2 - Rivers and Harbors Act carried authorization and appropriation for waterway from the Mississippi River to Bayou Teche, providing the intracoastal waterway with a direct route west from the Mississippi to the Sabine.

1923 March 3 - Rivers and Harbors Act authorized examination and survey of the intracoastal waterway from the Mississippi River at or near New Orleans to Corpus Christi, Texas.

June 1 - In proposing the course of the channel from the Sabine River to Galveston, Gulf Division Engineer George M. Hoffman departed from the earlier principle of dredging through the open bays, defending instead the notion of a landlocked channel to run along and inside the shoreline. This change in philosophy led to eventual relocation of many older channels.

In July, the Intracoastal Canal Association of Louisiana and Texas engaged retired Army Engineer Major General George Goethals to study the commercial potential of a continuous canal through Louisiana and Texas. On November 27, Goethals reported that "the present tonnage possibilities of such a waterway are between 5 million and 7 million tons annually, and this statement is conservative."

1925 March 3 - Congress authorized construction of the "Louisiana and Texas Intracoastal Waterway" to extend as a continuous 9-by-100-foot channel from New Orleans to Galveston Bay. This was the first legislation that treated the waterway as a whole rather than addressing disconnected, discrete segments. At the same time, Congress also called for preliminary examinations and surveys east of the Mississippi River from New Orleans to the Apalachicola River.

1927 January 21 - Congress authorized extension of the Louisiana and Texas Intracoastal Waterway as far west as Corpus Christi.

1930 July 3 - Rivers and Harbors Act contained the first appropriations for a 9-foot-deep intracoastal waterway east of the Mississippi River. This would afford improved continuous passage from Pensacola Bay to New Orleans. The act also authorized a number of examinations and surveys for various carol routes across Georgia and Florida to connect the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway with the proposed Gulf Intracoastal Waterway, including a route from Stuart on the Atlantic coast of Florida via the St. Lucie Canal, Lake Okeechobee, and the Caloosahatchee River. Still, another survey called for study of a waterway from Pensacola along the western coast of Florida to the Caloosahatchee River.

1934 Completion of the Galveston-to-Sabine River segment united the Louisiana and Texas portions of the intracoastal waterway.

1935 August 30 - Rivers and Harbors Act provided for 9-foot construction on the remaining segments in the eastern leg of the GIWW, from Apalachicola River to Pensacola. Congress also authorized preliminary examinations and surveys along the western coast of the Florida peninsula from Apalachicola Bay to the Withlacoochee River and from the Withlacoochee River to the Caloosahatchee River "with a view to securing a waterway . . . for the purpose of affording suitable exit to the north for craft using the Okeechobee Cross-Florida Canal."

On Labor Day, a hurricane grounded the S.S. Dixie on French Reef in the Florida Keys. Within a day or two, President Franklin D. Roosevelt allocated \$5 million in relief funds to begin construction of a cross-Florida canal, a project still not authorized by Congress. On December 15, Roosevelt announced he would use no more relief monies for the canal and that Congress could determine the fate of the project.

- 1936 September - Work on the cross-Florida canal was discontinued as funds were exhausted.
- A continuous 9-by-100-foot channel was completed between the Apalachicola River and New Orleans.
- 1942 The 9-by-100 foot project from New Orleans to Corpus Christi was completed.
- July 23 - Congress authorized a high-level lock barge canal across Florida from the St. Johns River to the Gulf of Mexico and provided for enlargement of the existing GIWW to project dimensions of 12 by 125 feet. It also approved "the extension of the GIWW to the Mexican border.
- 1949 June 18 - Channel completed between Corpus Christi and Brownsville, affording a continuous waterway from Apalachee Bay to the Mexican border.
- 1962 Appropriations began for construction of the cross-Florida barge canal.
- Congress authorized the enlargement of the GIWW between Galveston Bay and the Mississippi River to a 16-foot depth and 150-200-foot widths.
- 1964 Actual construction resumed on the cross-Florida barge canal.
- 1968 Waterway from St. Marks to Tampa Bay authorized but not funded.
- 1971 Work stopped on cross-Florida barge canal for environmental reasons.
- 1980 October 1 - First fee for GIWW users levied in form of a tax on marine fuel.